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Items 16, 20 (a), 27 (b), 28, 36, 64 (b), 70, 114 and 119 (b) of the provisional agenda*

The role of the United Nations in promoting a new global human order

Sustainable development: implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development

Social development: social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family

Advancement of women

The situation in the Middle East

New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support: causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa

Promotion and protection of human rights

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Strengthening of the United Nations system: central role of the United Nations system in global governance

Note verbale dated 11 July 2012 from the Permanent Mission of Morocco to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of Morocco to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Office of the Secretary-General and, in its capacity as Chair of the Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, has the honour to forward to the General Assembly herewith the text of the following four resolutions adopted by the 126th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, held in Kampala from 31 March to 5 April 2012:

* A/67/150.

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Please recycle

- Redistribution of power, not just wealth: ownership of the international agendas (agenda items 16, 20 (a), 28 and 119 (c); see annex I)
- Access to health as a basic right: the role of parliaments in addressing key challenges to securing the health of women and children (agenda items 28 and 114; see annex II)
- Inter-Parliamentary Union initiative for an immediate halt to the bloodshed and human rights violations in Syria, and the need to ensure access to humanitarian aid for all persons in need and to support implementation of all relevant Arab League and United Nations resolutions and peace efforts (agenda items 36 and 70; see annex III)
- Promoting and practising good governance as a means of advancing peace and security: drawing lessons from recent events in the Middle East and North Africa (agenda items 27 (b), 36 and 64 (b); see annex IV)

The Permanent Mission of Morocco to the United Nations kindly requests the Office of the Secretary-General to circulate the present letter and its annexes as a document of the General Assembly.

Annex I to the note verbale dated 11 July 2012 from the Permanent Mission of Morocco to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and French]

Redistribution of power, not just wealth: ownership of the international agendas

Resolution adopted unanimously by the 126th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)

The 126th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Convinced that the governance structures of international institutions must be democratized so as to ensure that representative voices of all the world's people are heard,

Mindful that it is extremely urgent to respond effectively to acute and increasing global challenges transcending national borders, all of which threaten the future of humanity and include climate change, the sustainability and security of natural resources, the food crisis, lack of respect for human rights, the failure of financial systems and international trade arrangements, international terrorism and organized crime,

Aware that the priorities of existing multilateral institutions and forums are too often dominated by the interests of certain powerful States and their economies, and that the preoccupations of these States frequently marginalize the needs of those nations and peoples most exposed to the consequences of the economic, social, cultural and political crises with which the multilateral institutions endeavour to grapple,

Considering that the great powers disproportionately generate the very challenges that preoccupy them and affect the world as a whole,

Recognizing that lasting stability and security depend on the representative, transparent, accountable and effective nature of political systems and their institutions, and that this holds true at the neighbourhood, local, provincial, national and international levels,

Concerned that there remains a high degree of underrepresentation of women in positions of power, not only in parliaments and government, but also in international institutions such as the United Nations and the World Bank, and that gender mainstreaming is greatly needed to enable women to participate in and contribute to achieving the Millennium Development Goals,

Mindful that the effective participation of women in all spheres of decision-making and at all levels is crucial for relevant, successful and effective policies, and that the ownership of the agendas of global political institutions must therefore belong to all their constituent members and reflect their different perspectives,

Considering that speedy reform is essential at all levels to provide for inclusive and democratic decision-making and problem-solving and to combat alienation and instability,

Recalling that the preamble and Article 1 of the Charter of the United Nations spell out the objectives: "to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, ... to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principles of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, ... to achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural and humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion",

1. *Expresses its conviction* that it is imperative for international institutions, including the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization, to take immediate steps to ensure that their structures and arrangements for governance — including the preparation of agendas, voting arrangements, decision-making processes, records of proceedings and methods of appointing chief executives — are made transparent and genuinely democratic and that all staff appointments are based on merit while seeking to achieve geographical, ethnic and gender balance;

2. *Calls* for the establishment alongside the Group of 20 of an inclusive and fully representative global economic council, whose mission would be to coordinate the action of the United Nations and its Member States in the economic and social spheres, and notes that such a global economic council could result from reforms to the current United Nations Economic and Social Council;

3. *Strongly recommends* that the appointment of the United Nations Secretary-General be an open and transparent process aimed at finding the most competent and qualified person for the task;

4. *Demands* reform of the membership of the United Nations Security Council in the near future, particularly regarding its permanent members, that is adapted to the new power balances in the world and gives the Security Council the credibility and effectiveness that it needs in the twenty-first century to promote peace and international security, as distinct from the post-1945 era;

5. *Appeals* for all appointments within the United Nations system to be made transparently and on the basis of merit while striving to ensure geographical, ethnic and gender balance;

6. *Calls* for mandatory registers of lobbyists or accredited observers and bodies to be introduced at the national and international levels of policy- and decision-making wherever applicable and in accordance with the law in order to ensure that their actions are more transparent and citizens are better informed about them;

7. *Believes* that, notwithstanding the current financial and economic concerns, climate change, by far the greatest challenge facing humanity, should be consistently and effectively addressed through a fair, transparent and equitable process, fully engaging all sections of civil society and respecting the principles of

the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in particular equity and common but differentiated responsibilities;

8. *Calls* for sustainable development to be given the highest political priority and welcomes the proposal of the Global Sustainability Panel in the context of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) to create a global sustainable development council;

9. *Strongly encourages* compliance with the requirements of equity and renewal of political commitment to sustainable development based on the Rio principles, both of which should be key objectives of Rio+20 and vital components of legitimate global governance;

10. *Calls upon* parliamentarians to advocate strongly these priorities and work for immediate action by their governments to ensure their rapid implementation;

11. *Also calls upon* parliamentarians to advocate special measures and incentives to facilitate the inclusion of women from all walks of life in decision-making and agenda-setting processes at the local, national, regional and international levels;

12. *Further calls upon* parliamentarians to encourage international institutions to revitalize the women's agenda globally and to mainstream gender in their objectives, structures and work;

13. *Appeals* to parliamentarians to strive to generate widespread public understanding of why these priorities are essential and why any delay in implementing them can no longer be tolerated;

14. *Resolves* to ensure that the Inter-Parliamentary Union undertake an annual review of progress worldwide in the areas of integrity, accountability, inclusiveness and fully representative democracy at all levels of power.

Annex II to the note verbale dated 11 July 2012 from the Permanent Mission of Morocco to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and French]

Access to health as a basic right: the role of parliaments in addressing key challenges to securing the health of women and children

Resolution adopted unanimously by the 126th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (Kampala, 5 April 2012)

The 126th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Recognizing the United Nations Millennium Declaration (2000), which established eight Millennium Development Goals,

Underscoring that a human-rights approach is fundamental to achieving those Goals,

Noting that Millennium Development Goal 4 aims to reduce the under-five child mortality rate by two thirds between 1990 and 2015 and that Goal 5 aims to reduce the maternal mortality ratio by three quarters between 1990 and 2015,

Concerned that the funding gap to ensure universal access to reproductive health remains unacceptably high and that donor and developing countries need to step up their commitments to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, in particular Goal 5,

Drawing attention to the fact that improvements in maternal and child health require progress related to poverty and hunger (Goal 1), access to education (Goal 2), gender equality and the empowerment of women (Goal 3), and the prevalence of HIV/AIDS and malaria (Goal 6),

Underscoring that the international community has committed to achieving the Millennium Development Goals by 2015,

Concerned that in 2008 an estimated 358,000 women worldwide died from complications related to pregnancy and childbirth, and underscoring that 99 per cent of these deaths occurred in developing countries,

Also concerned that in 2010 an estimated 7.6 million children died before reaching their fifth birthday, with 41 per cent dying in their first month, and that over 170 million children under 5 worldwide are affected by stunting,

Deeply concerned that maternal and child mortality rates remain unacceptably high globally and that many countries are not on track to achieve Millennium Development Goals 4 and 5,

Recognizing that less than half of all pregnant women in sub-Saharan Africa and only half of all pregnant women in Southern Asia are attended to by skilled health professionals, including midwives, during labour and delivery, which is one of the major factors contributing to maternal and newborn deaths; that midwives are

in short supply in many developing countries; and that there is an urgent need, particularly in countries with high maternal mortality rates, to provide assistance in the recruitment, training and support of professional midwives,

Also recognizing that lack of access to quality sexual and reproductive health services and supplies, in particular family-planning services, which include contraceptives, is a major contributing factor to maternal mortality,

Noting that ineffective and poorly resourced health systems, particularly the lack of human resources for health and inaccessible health-care facilities, are key impediments to improved health outcomes,

Also noting that the burden on health professionals in many developing countries could be lightened by improvements in health governance, including measures to expand and improve access to skilled birth attendant services,

Reiterating that universal access to reproductive health is one of the targets of Millennium Development Goal 5 (b),

Concerned that contraceptive prevalence rates are low and the need for family planning and level of unwanted pregnancies are high in many countries with worrisome maternal mortality rates, particularly among adolescents, and that international assistance for family planning has diminished significantly since the year 2000,

Considering that unwanted pregnancies are disproportionately high among young unmarried girls, who also run the highest risk of pregnancy-related morbidity and mortality,

Noting that unsafe abortions account for 13 per cent of maternal deaths,

Also noting that although maternal mortality is the leading cause of death among adolescent girls in most developing countries, adolescent girls are most likely to give birth without skilled birth attendants,

Further noting that young people remain disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS, accounting for 41 per cent of all new infections among 15- to 49-year-olds, and that young women between the ages of 15 and 19 are particularly vulnerable because of gender inequalities, sexual violence, early marriage, intergenerational relationships and more limited access to education,

Aware of the importance of providing information, education and services that are appropriate to people's age and needs throughout the life cycle,

Affirming that comprehensive sex education that is age-appropriate, gender-sensitive and evidence-based is crucial if young people are to be provided with the knowledge and skills they need to make informed decisions about their sexuality and given the means to protect themselves from unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV and AIDS,

Aware that a critical window to improve children's health and secure their prospects for lifelong development through adequate nutrition exists between pregnancy and a child's second birthday, so as to guarantee them an appropriate role in the country's long-term development with the capacity to assimilate what they learn through the education system,

Affirming the commitment to uphold the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,

Considering the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995),

Recalling the political declaration adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in June 2011, which committed to working towards the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS by 2015 and to substantially reducing AIDS-related maternal deaths,

Also recalling resolution 11/8 on preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and human rights, adopted by the United Nations Human Rights Council on 17 June 2009,

Welcoming the resolution on eliminating maternal mortality and morbidity through the empowerment of women, adopted by consensus at the fifty-fourth session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women,

Appreciating the commitment made at the Group of Eight Summit held in Canada in June 2010 to allocate $7.3 billion to carry out initiatives in the least developed countries, to contribute to implementing the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health launched by the United Nations Secretary-General and the commitment made at the fifteenth African Union Summit of Heads of State (Uganda, 2010) to fulfil the pledges taken at the Abuja Summit by allocating 15 per cent of the overall State budget to health,

Mindful of the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the 2008 Accra Agenda for Action, as well as the 2011 Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation,

Considering previous resolutions of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, in particular those pertaining to the Millennium Development Goals, women's and children's health, and gender equality and human rights, and the outcome document of the Sixth Annual Meeting of Women Speakers of Parliament held in 2010,

Affirming that enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health is an internationally recognized human right,

Aware that gender is a key determinant of health and that the causes of many of the differences and inequalities between women's and men's health status are social, economic and cultural,

Underscoring that the enhancement of women's and children's health is much more than a policy goal and that States have an obligation to respect, promote, protect and fulfil women's, children's and adolescents' right to health on a non-discriminatory basis,

Committed to realizing the goals of the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health and the recommendations of the Commission on Information and Accountability for Women's and Children's Health, and underscoring the centrality of parliamentary action therein,

Encouraged by the increasing parliamentary attention in the national, regional and international spheres, and resources being devoted to reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health,

Noting, however, that progress in reducing maternal and child mortality has been uneven across regions and within countries, and that this must be addressed as a matter of urgency,

Stressing that special attention must be given to the health needs and rights of women, newborns, children and adolescents who belong to one or multiple vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, including those in the poorest households, living in rural and remote areas, and affected by HIV/AIDS, adolescent girls, indigenous women and children, migrant women and children, refugee and internally displaced women and children as well as those in humanitarian, conflict and post-conflict situations, sex workers, and women and children with disabilities, and recognizing the importance of introducing measures to reduce inequalities and of commitment to equality of access and outcome for these disadvantaged groups,

Underscoring that equal access to quality education and sexual and reproductive education for all women, children and adolescents is a key intervention that can reduce health inequities and improve health in cases of communicable and non-communicable diseases,

Also underscoring that efforts need to be focused on young people as young men and women, married or unmarried, need access to sexual and reproductive health information and services,

Further underscoring, in keeping with the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action and key actions for its further implementation, the importance of universal access to post-abortion care and access to safe abortions where they are legal,

Underlining that most maternal and child deaths are preventable and that many are the result of conditions that may be avoided through immunization or treated by well-known and cost-effective interventions,

Convinced that the rationale for prioritizing women's, newborn, children's and adolescent health in development strategies is compelling and that the need to do so is indisputable,

Emphasizing the need for parliamentarians and governments to tackle the problems of ill health caused by the smoking of tobacco and tobacco products, to coordinate efforts to protect adults and children from the harmful effects of second-hand smoke, to deplore the activities of the tobacco companies in targeting markets in least developed countries and developing countries, and the need for all countries to adopt the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control,

1. *Calls upon* all parliamentarians, both men and women, and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, to take all possible measures to generate and sustain the political will as well as the appropriate resources needed to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, and to put in place the policies and commitments needed for the post-2015 period;

2. *Encourages* parliamentarians to collaborate and build partnerships with relevant stakeholders to achieve the health-related Millennium Development Goals,

working closely with governments, civil society, local communities, health-care professionals, academics and research institutions, multilateral organizations, global funds and foundations, the media and the private sector;

3. *Recommends* that national parliaments, regional parliamentary assemblies and the Inter-Parliamentary Union hold regular debates on progress towards the realization of Millennium Development Goals 3, 4, 5 and 6 and target 1.C;

4. *Calls upon* the parliaments of States that have not yet done so to support ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, as well as the relevant Optional Protocols, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and to commit to the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health;

5. *Urges* parliamentarians to closely monitor the domestic implementation of international, regional and national human rights instruments so as to ensure that all health-related obligations and recommendations, including those under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, are fully implemented and respected by all levels of government, and calls upon parliaments to participate in the deliberations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Committee on the Rights of the Child, and to seek the support of the Inter-Parliamentary Union Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians;

6. *Recommends* that parliaments request annual updates on the steps taken by their governments to implement international human rights instruments and programmes related to health and gender equality;

7. *Encourages* parliaments to include gender impact assessments with the introduction of all health-related legislation, and also encourages the Inter-Parliamentary Union to facilitate exchanges among its member parliaments so as to build capacity in this area;

8. *Invites* parliaments to see to it that national health policies and strategies incorporate a gender perspective, and that education of health-care workers and research take full account of the existing gender differences in health;

9. *Urges* parliaments to introduce or amend legislation to guarantee equal access to health services for all women and children without discrimination, and to provide free essential health services for all pregnant women and children;

10. *Also urges* parliaments to establish specialized parliamentary committees on women and children, to monitor progress on the implementation and ratification of resolutions and declarations on women and children, and to address women's and children's health issues more comprehensively;

11. *Further urges* parliaments to pass laws explicitly criminalizing all forms of violence against women and girls, including domestic and sexual violence and in situations of armed conflict, and other forms of violence such as forced sterilization,

forced and early marriage and female genital mutilation, and calls upon parliaments to enact laws to prevent violence and provide support and reparation to survivors;

12. *Calls upon* parliaments to use the oversight and accountability tools at their disposal throughout the budgetary process, as well as innovative financing approaches, to ensure that adequate domestic financial resources are allocated for sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health, and for achieving Millennium Development Goals 4, 5 and 6 at the national level;

13. *Requests* parliaments to ensure that the domestic funds and aid allocated to women's and children's health are released and used for the relevant programmes;

14. *Calls upon* parliamentarians to use the oversight and accountability tools at their disposal to work to ensure that all commitments made to the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health are fulfilled, and that all the recommendations of the subsequent Commission on Information and Accountability for Women's and Children's Health are implemented;

15. *Requests* the agencies of the United Nations system, in particular the WHO, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Children's Fund, to provide countries with more of the multifaceted support they need to implement policies and programmes aimed at reducing maternal and infant mortality;

16. *Calls upon* parliaments to further enhance support for education in order to improve long-term health outcomes in general and to promote individuals' contribution to society;

17. *Encourages* parliaments to advocate for lines in the health budget to be earmarked for the provision of essential sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health services to vulnerable women and children, including those in the poorest households, those living in rural areas, those who are members of indigenous communities or minority groups, those with disabilities, those living with HIV/AIDS, and adolescent girls;

18. *Also encourages* parliaments to support gender-sensitive budgeting as a tool for addressing women's health needs;

19. *Further encourages* parliamentarians to advocate for increasing the number of midwives, assistance with the recruitment, training and support of professional midwives, and the provision of accommodation for mothers, near or in the hospital if necessary, before their delivery, in order to gain access to professional and monitored delivery;

20. *Urges* parliaments to ensure that parliamentary committees entrusted with monitoring issues pertaining to health and gender equality are adequately resourced and operational;

21. *Also urges* parliamentarians in African States to establish a broadly agreed timetable for their governments to honour their commitments under the 2001 Abuja Declaration;

22. *Invites* the African States that have not yet done so to implement the Maputo Plan of Action for Africa, adopted by the African Union summit in 2006, which provides inter alia for the adoption of national road maps to reduce maternal, newborn and infant mortality in accordance with the African Union road map, and calls for the Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa,

initiated and launched by the African Union in 2009, to be introduced in all countries;

23. *Calls upon* member parliaments, in particular those of the Group of Eight member countries, to use the oversight and accountability mechanisms at their disposal to monitor the fulfilment of financial commitments made towards health initiatives in the least developed countries;

24. *Urges* parliaments and their members to take all necessary measures to enhance women's effective participation and leadership at all levels of health governance;

25. *Calls upon* parliamentarians in countries providing official development assistance to work towards increasing their country's official development assistance for health and to hold their governments to account for honouring their commitments and for reporting — on the basis of common international indicators — on the proportion of official development assistance being channelled towards reproductive, women's, children's and adolescent health and the promotion of gender equality, and to ensure that these funds are audited in terms of their efficiency and effectiveness;

26. *Also calls upon* parliamentarians in countries that provide official development assistance to evaluate this spending, including through parliamentary field visits and deliberations in committees on development assistance, to ensure that it prioritizes the recipient countries, sectors, communities and programmes with the greatest demonstrated needs and vulnerabilities, and that these resources are distributed in a more equitable manner;

27. *Encourages* parliamentarians in countries that provide official development assistance to examine the degree to which their government's official development assistance is being coordinated with other donors and harmonized and aligned with the health systems, plans and priorities of recipient countries;

28. *Also encourages* parliamentarians in countries that provide official development assistance to verify that the aid programmes are implemented, in particular in the field of maternal and child health, that they are managed against results-based objectives, and that they are based on the principle of shared responsibility;

29. *Calls upon* parliamentarians to scrutinize all government health interventions to ensure they are, as far as possible, evidence-based, conform to international human rights standards, and are responsive to regular and transparent performance reviews;

30. *Also calls upon* parliamentarians to promote integrated health services, and to advocate for balanced resources to meet the needs of women and children in the pre-pregnancy, prenatal, birth, postnatal, infancy and early childhood stages, particularly through the decentralization of health services;

31. *Encourages* parliamentarians to ensure a coordinated approach to all matters pertaining to maternal and child health, such as sanitation, access to safe drinking water, the fight against malnutrition, and gender equality;

32. *Calls upon* parliamentarians to ensure free access to vaccines and medicines to protect women and children from disease;

33. *Urges* parliaments to support the training of health professionals, including midwives and birth attendants, as well as universal access to reproductive health information, services and supplies, including contraceptives;

34. *Appeals* to parliamentarians to promote the establishment and/or enhancement, before 2015, of accurate civil registration systems to register all births and deaths and causes of death, particularly in relation to women, children and adolescents;

35. *Urges* parliaments to encourage the development of national information systems that include a gender perspective and data from all health facilities and administrative sources and surveys, which should subsequently be used to inform parliamentary debates;

36. *Encourages* parliaments to take into consideration, including as part of development cooperation, the World Health Organization recommendations on maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health, such as the guidelines for preventing early pregnancy and poor reproductive outcomes among adolescents in developing countries, and to support the implementation of the World Health Organization Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel;

37. *Also encourages* parliaments to explore innovative approaches to health service design and delivery, including the use of information and communications technologies such as telemedicine and mobile phones, in order to reach women, children and adolescents in remote areas, to facilitate emergency responses to births and to collect and disseminate health information as widely as possible and in accessible formats to women with disabilities, and to ensure sex education;

38. *Calls upon* parliaments to work with governments to consider the establishment of transparent domestic accountability mechanisms for maternal and child health, one form of which could be a multi-stakeholder national commission that reports to parliament;

39. *Requests* the Inter-Parliamentary Union to facilitate collaboration and exchanges among its member parliaments so as to build the capacity of parliamentarians to monitor all policy and programme areas, as well as the above-mentioned budgetary and legislative activities;

40. *Encourages* the Inter-Parliamentary Union to enhance cooperation with the specialized agencies of the United Nations system and parliamentary networks engaged in the promotion of women's and children's health and rights;

41. *Requests* the Inter-Parliamentary Union to develop an accountability mechanism based on the 2011 report of the Commission on Information and Accountability for Women's and Children's Health, entitled "Keeping promises, measuring results", to monitor the progress of member parliaments in implementing this resolution between the date of its adoption and 2015, and to publish the results of that review annually;

42. *Urges* parliamentarians to work for age-appropriate, gender-sensitive and evidence-based sex education for all young people;

43. *Also urges* parliamentarians, in keeping with the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action, to ensure universal access to post-abortion care and to make sure that abortions are safe where they are legal as a means of saving the lives of girls, adolescents and women.

Annex III to the note verbale dated 11 July 2012 from the Permanent Mission of Morocco to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and French]

Inter-Parliamentary Union initiative for an immediate halt to the bloodshed and human rights violations in Syria, and the need to ensure access to humanitarian aid for all persons in need and to support implementation of all relevant Arab League and United Nations resolutions and peace efforts

Resolution adopted by consensus* by the 126th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)

The 126th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Recalling the resolution entitled "Strengthening democratic reform in emerging democracies, including in North Africa and the Middle East", adopted unanimously by the 124th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (Panama City, 2011), which urged all parties to refrain from violence and to ensure in particular that human rights are respected, called on all governments to respect the right to peaceful self-determination of peoples and expressed concern for the humanitarian impact of the political changes in the region on vulnerable groups, particularly women and children,

Also recalling the resolution entitled "Furthering parliamentary democracy in order to protect human rights and encourage reconciliation among peoples and partnership among nations", adopted by the 110th Assembly (Mexico City, 2004), in which the Assembly underlined that the holding of truly free and fair elections based on secret balloting and universal suffrage, monitored by independent election authorities, was always of paramount importance in the establishment of parliaments reflecting national diversity and, particularly in countries emerging from violent conflict, was essential in consolidating and advancing the reconciliation process, and called on parliaments to respect the political rights of opposition parties and freedom of the press,

Expressing its solidarity and sympathy for the Syrian people, whose democratic freedoms and human rights are being systematically and brutally undermined by their own government,

Noting that sustained and unjustified violence continues to be perpetrated against the Syrian people, including the killing and persecution of protestors, human rights defenders and journalists, denial of access to medical treatment, and the torture of and violence against men, women and children,

* The delegations from Chile, Cuba, South Africa, Uganda and Viet Nam expressed a reservation on operative paragraph 12, while the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Iran (Islamic Republic of), the Syrian Arab Republic and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) rejected the entire resolution, which, in their view, was unbalanced.

Cognizant of the serious humanitarian crisis and dismayed by the mounting loss of life and injury being caused by this violence, largely due to armed attacks perpetrated by the Syrian Government against its own population,

Alarmed by these authorities' use of heavy military equipment, including artillery and combat tanks, against towns and other population centres and their resorting to mass murder, arbitrary detentions, forced disappearances, torture and ill-treatment of detained persons, in particular children,

Noting the need to hold to account the perpetrators of human rights violations, including those that may amount to crimes against humanity,

Also noting the League of Arab States plan of 2 November 2011 and their decisions of 22 January and 12 February 2012, respectively, agreed to by the Syrian Government, which called in particular for an immediate end to violence against protestors, the release of political prisoners, the removal of all tanks and armoured vehicles from the streets and the convening of a meeting in Cairo for dialogue with the opposition,

Further noting the declaration of the League of Arab States of 29 March 2012,

Considering the repeated demands by the United Nations and the League of Arab States for the Syrian Government to honour its commitment to the Arab League plan and to permit the delivery of humanitarian assistance and the evacuation of wounded persons,

Recalling the decisions of the thirty-first International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, held in Geneva from 28 November to 1 December 2011, on strengthening international humanitarian law and domestic legislation for disaster-risk reduction, addressing regulatory barriers to providing emergency and transitional shelter in a rapid and equitable manner after natural disasters, and humanitarian access and assistance,

Noting United Nations General Assembly resolution 66/253 A of 16 February 2012, which strongly condemned "the continued widespread and systematic violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms by the Syrian authorities, such as the use of force against civilians, arbitrary executions, the killing and persecution of protestors, human rights defenders and journalists, arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances, interference with access to medical treatment, torture, sexual violence, and ill-treatment, including against children",

Recalling the statement issued by the President of the United Nations Security Council on 21 March 2012 (S/PRST/2012/6), in which the Security Council expressed its full support for the efforts of Kofi Annan, the Joint Special Envoy of the United Nations and the League of Arab States, and his six-point proposal to commit to the appointment of an empowered interlocutor to address the aspirations of the Syrian people; the cessation of violence; the provision of humanitarian assistance in affected areas; the release of arbitrarily detained persons; freedom of movement for journalists; and freedom of association and the right to demonstrate peacefully,

Also recalling United Nations Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009) and 1960 (2010) on women and peace and security,

Further recalling the resolutions of 29 April 2011, 23 August 2011, 2 December 2011 and 1 and 23 March 2012 of the United Nations Human Rights Council on the human rights situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, and underscoring that in its resolutions of 2 December 2011 and 1 and 23 March 2012, the Council strongly condemned the systematic and widespread violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms that the Syrian authorities continue to commit,

Underscoring its respect for the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic, and rejecting any external military intervention,

Noting that the Syrian Government held discussions with the Joint Special Envoy of the United Nations and the League of Arab States, and that it agreed on 27 March 2012, but has not yet implemented, his six-point proposal, which envisages a United Nations-supervised ceasefire and the establishment of political dialogue between government and opposition groups,

Concerned by the grave risk to regional stability and security posed by the Syrian Government's use of violence rather than dialogue to address calls for reform,

Frustrated by the continued failure of the Syrian Government to respond to or implement the decisions and resolutions of international and regional bodies,

1. *Calls* for an immediate cessation of the violence and human rights violations and abuses in Syria and also calls for full compliance by all parties with international human rights and international humanitarian law obligations;

2. *Supports* the efforts of international and regional organizations to bring about a peaceful end to the crisis in Syria;

3. *Urges* the United Nations and the League of Arab States to redouble their efforts to assist in bringing about an end to armed violence in Syria and to address the current humanitarian crisis;

4. *Supports* the unprecedented leadership and efforts of the Joint Special Envoy of the United Nations and the League of Arab States and his six-point proposal for resolving the situation in Syria;

5. *Calls upon* the Syrian Government to honour its commitment to this proposal and its earlier commitment to the Arab League Plan, including withdrawing military personnel from cities, ending the use of heavy weapons, releasing political prisoners and cooperating fully and immediately with the United Nations and humanitarian organizations to facilitate the unhindered and safe provision of humanitarian assistance and to allow the evacuation of the wounded from affected areas;

6. *Urges* the commencement of an inclusive political process in Syria to address the legitimate democratic aspirations and concerns of the Syrian people;

7. *Underscores* that this political process must be conducted in an environment free of violence, torture, fear, intimidation, discrimination and extremism;

8. *Expresses* the hope that this process can lead to an all-inclusive democratic political system, in which all citizens are equal;

9. *Underscores* the pivotal role the Inter-Parliamentary Union can play in coming to the assistance of emerging democracies, fostering political reconciliation and the peaceful settlement of conflicts, and in upholding and protecting the principles of representative democracy, human rights and gender equality;

10. *Requests* the Inter-Parliamentary Union to dispatch an international parliamentary fact-finding mission to the Syrian territories to examine the reality of the situation arising from the violence and the deliberate hampering of the activities of international and Arab relief organizations, and to issue an urgent report to the Inter-Parliamentary Union membership with a view to taking the necessary measures;

11. *Urges* parliaments to provide all necessary humanitarian assistance to all persons in Syria affected by the violence and to participate in making immediate preparations for extending such assistance, including in neighbouring countries;

12. *Supports* the continuation of diplomatic and economic sanctions on the Syrian Government until such a time as the situation improves significantly;

13. *Requests* the Inter-Parliamentary Union President to report on the implementation of this resolution at the 127th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and at the United Nations.

Annex IV to the note verbale dated 11 July 2012 from the Permanent Mission of Morocco to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and French]

Promoting and practising good governance as a means of advancing peace and security: drawing lessons from recent events in the Middle East and North Africa

Resolution adopted by consensus* by the 126th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)

The 126th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Considering that there is compelling evidence to support the positive correlation between good governance and the level of peace and security in society and the world,

Reaffirming the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which are the indispensable foundations of a more peaceful, prosperous and just world, and reiterating our determination to foster strict respect for them (see 2005 World Summit Outcome, General Assembly resolution 60/1, para. 2),

Supporting all efforts to uphold the sovereign equality of all States and respect their territorial integrity and political independence; refrain in international relations from threatening or using force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations; settle disputes by peaceful means and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law; respect the right to self-determination of peoples remaining under colonial domination and foreign occupation; uphold non-interference in the internal affairs of States; ensure respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; guarantee respect for the equal rights of all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion; seek international cooperation when solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character; and meet in good faith the obligations assumed in accordance with the Charter (ibid., para. 5),

Recognizing that good governance is the manner of governing that aims to achieve sustainable economic, social and institutional development, while promoting a healthy balance between the State, civil society and the market economy, and that there is no way of exercising it other than by serving the interests of the people,

Mindful that the role of public authorities in creating an environment for entrepreneurs to function and in determining the distribution of benefits as well as the nature of the relationship between governments and citizens is pivotal in promoting and practising good governance at the national and international levels,

* The delegation of Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) expressed its opposition to the resolution because of the approach it took on good governance.

Noting that good governance leads to efficient and accountable institutions, i.e. political, judicial, administrative, economic and corporate rules that promote development and the rule of law, protect human rights and ensure that people are free to participate and be heard in decisions that affect their lives,

Also noting that the catalysts for the uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa were several and included the concentration of wealth in the hands of autocrats in power for decades, a lack of transparency in the redistribution of that wealth, corruption and, in particular, young people's refusal to accept the status quo, while spiralling food prices and famine were also determining factors,

Acknowledging that the disconnect between the demands of civil society and the response of governments, as well as a lack of government reform, might well have contributed to the protests,

Expressing its sorrow for the victims of the political processes in the Middle East and North Africa, and its solidarity with the families of those who died in their quest for freedom and justice,

Noting the undeniably positive influence of education and exposure to issues of good governance,

Recalling the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 1976 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the 1981 African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, which, inter alia, provide that every citizen, regardless of gender, religion or race, has a right to take part in the conduct of public affairs directly or through freely chosen representatives, and that the will of the people should be expressed through free and fair elections based on universal and equal suffrage and secret ballots, in the full exercise of the sovereignty of the people, so as to constitute the basis for the legitimate and credible authority of government,

Also recalling the resolution entitled, "Providing a sound legislative framework aimed at preventing electoral violence, improving election monitoring and ensuring the smooth transition of power", adopted by the 124th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (Panama City, 2011), which calls upon parliaments, where necessary, "to undertake constitutional and legislative reform, building on international obligations and commitments and taking into account local realities, so as to provide a sound legal framework for free and fair elections that includes the adoption of electoral systems that provide for representative and inclusive outcomes, and for the smooth transfer of power",

Further recalling the above-mentioned Inter-Parliamentary Union resolution, which urges parliaments "to conduct such electoral reform through a comprehensive, inclusive and open debate that fosters the broadest possible involvement of all stakeholders, authorities, political parties, media and civil society organizations in the electoral process",

Noting that the recent events in the Middle East and North Africa have provided all countries with important lessons on democracy and freedom,

Also noting that those events have shown that people everywhere need democratic and legitimate governments based on the will of the people, expressed regularly through free and fair elections,

Further noting that it is always the people who have the right to determine their own political future based on the cultural and historical characteristics of their nation,

Reaffirming that democracy is a universal value based on the freely expressed will of people to determine their own political, economic, social and cultural systems and their full participation in all aspects of their lives and that, while democracies share common features, there is no single model of democracy and it does not belong to any country or region;

Also reaffirming the need for due respect for sovereignty and the right of self-determination (ibid., para. 135),

Mindful that people will not view democracy in a positive light if their livelihood is at stake and that democracy and development are inextricably linked,

Acknowledging that the experiences of other regions and of the past year tend to show that the process of democratization in the Middle East and North Africa will take a significant amount of time, given that it is often a lengthy, unpredictable and complex process, which involves changing power relations in society,

Convinced that the attainment of democracy requires extensive changes that are rooted in constitutions, electoral systems, laws and regulations related to political parties, the media, the justice system, an enabling environment for civil society and, not least, a change in attitudes, including a paradigm shift regarding the place of women in political life,

Also convinced that commitment to the principles of good governance in the management of public affairs will guarantee freedoms and the rule of law, reduce corruption, ensure fair elections, help establish systems and institutions that strive to provide the best services to all sectors of society, and be the best guarantor of political stability,

1. *Invites* all States and parliaments to consider the major lessons drawn from the Middle East, North Africa, Europe and the United States, as well as elsewhere in the world, on the need for democratic reform and for governments to provide their people with basic employment and economic opportunities, meet their citizens' demands and guarantee equal opportunities for all;

2. *Recommends* sustained investment in political reform where necessary, possibly to include the creation of independent government watchdogs, the amendment of constitutions, electoral systems, the judicial system, laws, regulations and processes related to political parties and the taking of measures to ensure the functioning of the media, the achievement of gender equality and the involvement of civil society;

3. *Also recommends* that particular attention be paid to security sector reform so that the police, intelligence services and armed forces act within the rule of law, fully respect the fundamental rights of citizens and are held to account for their acts to a democratically elected authority;

4. *Expresses its wish*, with a view to building inclusive societies, that transitional justice and the need to address the past are adequately taken into account in the transition process, in particular through the promotion of the truth,

the sentencing of perpetrators, the compensation of victims and the establishment of safeguards to avoid repeating mistakes of the past;

5. *Calls upon* all member parliaments that have not done so to ratify and ensure full implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and see to it that freedom of thought, expression and association, as well as other civil and political rights, are guaranteed;

6. *Also calls upon* parliaments to ensure the establishment of governance systems that will lead to the improvement of people's livelihoods so as to help restore faith in democratic institutions and democracy;

7. *Recommends* that leaders in the Middle East and North Africa, as well as elsewhere in the world, strive to implement policies that will help reduce economic inequality and tackle everyday problems, such as corruption, poverty and the lack of access to health services;

8. *Encourages* Inter-Parliamentary Union member parliaments to advocate for increased civic education, with a focus on the fundamental principles of democratic governance, while reflecting the diversity of histories and cultures;

9. *Urges* the international community to stand ready to help countries at their request and to support the transition process while complying with the principle of sovereignty as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, in order to avoid undue influence on the situation in States and the outcome of elections;

10. *Calls upon* the international community to promote comprehensive reform of the United Nations in order to achieve world peace, security and development through respect for the principles enshrined in its Charter as well as the fair representation of nations;

11. *Encourages* States to comply with the Millennium Declaration, which calls for the promotion of peace, security and human rights and the elimination of hunger and poverty, and stipulates the importance of and right to education in the context of sustainable growth;

12. *Invites* political parties, national parliaments and governments to implement policies and mechanisms aimed at ensuring the participation of women and youth in public political and economic life;

13. *Calls upon* all parliaments to enact legislation and take specific action to enhance their transparency, design information and communication technology tools to facilitate citizens' access to relevant information on parliamentary processes, exercise their oversight function over the other branches of the State and establish mechanisms enabling them regularly and vigorously to reach out to civil society and be answerable to it;

14. *Urges* the Inter-Parliamentary Union to lend support to the democratization process under way in the Middle East and North Africa, particularly in areas relating to the process of constitutional reform and the drafting of new electoral laws, as well as the sharing of good practices for open and inclusive electoral processes that are conducive to the establishment of representative and effective parliaments;

15. *Also urges* the Inter-Parliamentary Union to design and implement a programme of technical assistance and capacity-building that supports the newly elected parliaments in the Middle East and North Africa;

16. *Further urges* donor countries and the multilateral financial institutions to honour their aid pledges to the Arab Spring countries in order to rescue their economies, protect them from recession and reduce their levels of unemployment;

17. *Appeals* to the parliaments of the countries where stolen assets have been transferred to urge their governments and banks to recover such assets;

18. *Calls* for an international parliamentary conference on the role of youth in politics in the contemporary world and current technological developments to be held under the auspices of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.